

Substance Abuse Epidemiology Work Group

Meeting Minutes

May 21, 2008

Summary

Epidemiology Work Group Members in Attendance (8):

Michelle Anderson, Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections
Wendy Wolfersteig, Arizona Prevention Resource Center, Arizona State University
Meena Shahi, Arizona Department of Health Services, Division of Behavioral Health Services
Richard Porter, Arizona Department of Health Services
David Choate, proxy for Charles Katz, Arizona State University
Phillip Stevenson, Chair, Arizona Criminal Justice Commission
Katherine Guffey, Arizona Department of Economic Security—via conference call
Dennis Embry, PAXIS Institute

Epidemiology Work Group Members Absent (7)

Jody Sekerak, Indian Health Services
Zeena Mahal, Epidemiological Center, Inter Tribal Council of Arizona
James Cunningham, University of Arizona
Wesley Kortuem, Arizona Department of Health Services
Catherine Osborn, Arizona Department of Education
Gowri Shetty, Arizona Department of Health Services, Tobacco Education Prevention Program
Amy Stuart, Arizona Administrative Office of the Courts

Governor's Office Staff (1)

Jeanne Blackburn, (GOCYF, DSAP)

Public (2):

Michael Dolny, Arizona Department of Corrections
Steve Gendler, Arizona Department of Public Safety

Call to Order was made by Phillip Stevenson at 1:05 p.m. after noting that a quorum was present.

Welcome and Introductions

- Phillip Stevenson asked the attendees and guests present to introduce themselves and their respective agency/group.



Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Phillip Stevenson asked if anyone had any changes to the previous month's meeting minutes.
 - Errors to the minutes were noted with suggested changes, which will be made by Jeanne Blackburn.
- Richard Porter motioned that the meeting minutes be accepted with the recommended corrections. Meena Shahi seconded the motion. When prompted, all members in attendance offered their acceptance of the motion. There were no dissenters. Meeting minutes were accepted with corrections.

Announcements

- Dennis Embry notified the group that the Society for Prevention Research conference will be held in San Francisco, California from May 28 – 30, 2008.
- Phillip Stevenson updated group on the status of AYS survey efforts:
 - Data are still being collected from some schools.
 - Data collection efforts will be complete and results available in the summer. Results of the analyses will be distributed to schools at that time. After such distribution has been completed, more aggregate analyses will be performed and results will be made publicly-available.
 - One E-school implemented the online AYS, which Phillip Stevenson noted was a great learning experience. However, it only netted less than five returned surveys, which could be due to the active consent required by students' parent(s).
 - Survey monkey technology was used to provide the survey in this format.
 - Another school is considering an online administration of the survey.
 - Phillip Stevenson informed the group that a pre-test of the survey was done prior to administration, which revealed "bugs" in the system that were fixed prior to its debut.
 - Meena Shahi suggested adding a question to the survey about the ease of taking the survey in an online format to determine if users encountered any problems that were not noticed in the pre-test.
- Jeanne Blackburn reminded the group of the importance of adhering to Open Meeting Law, including meeting quorum and making meeting minutes available to the public.
 - Jeanne Blackburn will submit meeting minutes to The Governor's Office of Children, Youth and Families, Division on Community Relations, who will post them to the Governor's website.
 - Jeanne Blackburn reminded everyone that they should not hit "Reply to All" when responding to an e-mail from a group member, as doing so violates Open Meeting Law by creating a meeting that is not open to the public.
 - Quorum will be checked prior to calling any future meetings to order.
 - Meena Shahi asked if Jeanne Blackburn could send out an e-mail prior to the monthly meeting to update the group on the likelihood that a quorum will be had at the meeting to avoid having to cancel the meeting.



- Jeanne Blackburn will include this information in future e-mails and follow-up with members who do not respond on their availability to attend the meetings.
- Dennis Embry suggested using a Wiki for discussion among group members as a means to have discussions that are accessible to the public.
 - Jeanne Blackburn said that she will look into this possibility.

Substance Abuse Treatment Capacity Assessment: Update, Review of Results and Next Steps

- As the document has been available to the public and to the group members for some time, Jeanne Blackburn decided to forgo a review of the results and discuss Next Steps.
 - She elaborated that monthly updates/memos are made to the Governor on the steps taken since the *Substance Abuse Treatment Services Capacity Assessment* was written, including actions taken toward completion of the other pieces of Executive Order 2008-01 and that the Arizona Department of Health Services, the Arizona Department of Economic Security and the Governor's Office continue to meet to discuss and work on the Next Steps outlined in the report.
 - Richard Porter asked if this report replaces the efforts of the Arizona Prevention Resource Center (APRC).
 - Jeanne Blackburn responded that it is her understanding that the Arizona Department of Health Services (with input from the Arizona Department of Economic Security and the Governor's Office) will continue to do a network inventory on a yearly basis. This inventory will utilize the Findings and Next Steps outlined in the *Substance Abuse Treatment Services Capacity Assessment*.
 - Phillip Stevenson asked whether APRC has a statutory requirement to do a service capacity assessment.
 - Wendy Wolfersteig responded that her understanding is that the legislation that required them to do such an assessment was sunsetted.
 - Both Richard Porter and David Choate noted that the workload required of the group is getting too large, especially given the volunteer nature of the group and the fact that members have their regular jobs to do and many agencies are short-staffed due to the hiring freeze.
 - Phillip Stevenson addressed these concerns, mentioning that the Executive Action Briefing (to be discussed a little later in the meeting) discusses the need for an additional staff person.
 - Jeanne Blackburn reminded the group that with the state budget and the hiring freeze, without additional funding, hiring a person to assist the group will likely not be possible.
 - Dennis Embry noted that groups/foundations, such as St. Luke's Trust, may be able to support the group with funding.



Emerging Issues Subcommittee Update

- Dennis Embry updated the group on the Emerging Issues Subcommittee.
 - He indicated that other states have done reports on child welfare at the population level.
 - These reports have analyzed the benefit of calculating the costs/benefits of various strategic options/policies for dealing with the problems in the child welfare system.
 - Phillip Stevenson noted that caution should be used before embarking on another project as the group's deliverables need to be consistent with the Executive Action Briefings compiled by the Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership (ASAP).
 - He also noted that when the Executive Action Briefing (EAB) for "Emerging Issues and the State's Capacity to Respond" is released, a determination should be made on whether this type of report is in line with the intended outcomes of the EAB.
 - Dennis Embry gave the group a handout of a graph predicting past 30-day alcohol use using the PRIDE survey.
 - Dennis informed the group that the PRIDE survey results are currently used to inform policies aimed at reducing underage drinking, beginning with prevention among 12 – 15 year olds.
 - Phillip Stevenson asked what the graph tells us and how this information should be used by the Emerging Issues Subcommittee.
 - Dennis Embry responded that previous policy discussions have focused on later ages; a potential policy implication from such a graph/prediction would be that prevention programs need to be targeted at younger children.
 - Jeanne Blackburn noted that, while national data on youth illicit drug use and underage drinking is very beneficial in aiding our understanding of substance abuse, Arizona-specific information is a better tool for policy change at the state level.
 - David Choate noted that the Arizona Arrestee Reporting Information Network (AARIN), in addition to being a survey tool used among adults, targets juvenile offenders in assessing age of first use and past 30-day use. Such data could be crosswalked with national data (such as data from the PRIDE survey) for comparison purposes to determine how closely Arizona youth match their peers at the national level.



- Meena Shahi also indicated that the Arizona Department of Health Services collects data from youth receiving substance abuse treatment services, including use and route of use (e.g., smoke, snort, swallow, drink).
- Michelle Anderson noted that this is also true for youth in the Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections system.
- The group discussed how the deliverables of the Emerging Issues Subcommittee, which include the Life Path Project, focus group, and the use of national and local data to inform an early warning network system, will offer intervention implications.
 - David Choate noted that #5 on the Emerging Issues Work Plan needs to be made priority (i.e., #1).
 - Jeanne Blackburn indicated that she would move it to the top of the Work Plan.

Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership: Update

- Phillip Stevenson updated the group on the last meeting of the Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership, which included a discussion of the group's four strategic focus areas.
- Jeanne Blackburn provided the group members with a copy of the Executive Action Briefing, entitled "The Need for Data Driven Decision Making and Policy Development."
 - Phillip Stevenson asked the group members if they were comfortable with the problems/goals stated in the EAB and asked how we can work to accomplish them.
 - Group members wanted to clarify that the annual *Snapshot* document completed by the group was the focus of Problem 1, Action 3.
 - Jeanne Blackburn indicated that this is in fact the focus of this action item.
 - Meena Shahi noted that Problem 1, Action 5 would be a gargantuan undertaking and would require many person hours and money to accomplish and maintain.
 - Dennis Embry noted that this should read "data-sharing protocol" instead of "develop a dedicated clearinghouse that collects and analyzes substance use/abuse data."
 - David Choate noted that Memorandums of Agreement (MOA) should be used instead of a dedicated clearinghouse to allow data sharing among various agencies.
 - Richard Porter also noted that confidentiality is an issue when storing data in one location that are normally housed by multiple agencies.
 - Phillip Stevenson suggested that the wording of the EAB should be changed from data-file clearinghouse to a person who serves as a pass through for data-sharing requests.



- Wendy Wolfersteig informed the group of the Arizona Indicators Project done by Arizona State University. She suggested a potential partnership with ASU for collection of various data of importance to the group.
- Phillip Stevenson asked group members to provide their comments on the action items and outcomes and any other suggestions on the EAB to Jeanne Blackburn by June 6, 2008 for editing the EAB.

Epi Deliverable: Substantive Area for the 2008 “Snapshot of Arizona” Document

- David Choate suggested examining the work loads of member agencies for a time during the year that would work well for completion of this document.
- Dennis Embry suggested completing short documents that could be compiled together (as chapters of a larger *Snapshot* document).
 - The group members liked this idea as it would be easier to complete short documents than it would be to compile one large document.
 - The group also felt that this document should contain suggested policy implications.
 - Phillip Stevenson noted that this document should be completed before the legislature convenes in January if the document is to have any policy implications.
- Phillip Stevenson suggested tabling any further discussion of this item until the next meeting.
- Jeanne Blackburn agreed and said that she would place it higher on the agenda for the June meeting as this project needs to be completed soon.

Call to Public

- There were members of the public present. However, there were no comments from the guests in attendance.

Adjourn at 3:05 p.m. (Richard Porter motioned and Wendy Wolfersteig seconded the motion) with a reminder that the next meeting will be held on June 11, 2008.

Minutes submitted by Jeanne Blackburn (GOCYF, DSAP).